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the applause and confidence of the people to surrender their interests.

The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enemies.

Our detached and distinct situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisition upon us, will not lightly hazard the giving us provocation; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humor, or caprice?

It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world, so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it; for let me not be understood as capable of patronizing infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to public than to private affairs that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But in my opinion it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

Taking care always to keep ourselves by suitable establishments on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

## FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS

By THOMAS JEFFERSON, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, MARCH 4, 1801<sup>1</sup>

**A**BOUT to enter, fellow-citizens, on the exercise of duties which comprehend everything dear and valuable to you, it is proper you should understand what I deem the essential principles of our government, and consequently those which ought to shape its administration. I will compress them within the narrowest compass they will bear, stating the general principle, but not all its limitations. Equal and exact justice to all men, of whatever State or persuasion, religious or political; peace, commerce, and honest friendship with all nations,

entangling alliances with none; the support of the State governments in all their rights, as the most competent administrations for our domestic concerns and the surest bulwarks against antirepublican tendencies; the preservation of the General Government in its whole constitutional vigor, as the sheet anchor of our peace at home and safety abroad; a jealous care of the right of election by the people—a mild and safe corrective of abuses which are lopped by the sword of revolution where peaceable remedies are unprovided; absolute acquiescence in the decisions of the majority, the vital principle of republics, from which is no appeal but to force, the vital principle and immediate parent of despotism; a well-disciplined militia, our best reliance in peace and for the first moments of war, till regulars may relieve them; the supremacy of the civil over the military authority; economy in the public expense, that labor may be lightly burdened; the honest payment of our debts and sacred preservation of the public faith; encouragement of agriculture, and of commerce as its handmaid; the diffusion of information and arraignment of all abuses at the bar of the public reason; freedom of religion; freedom of the press, and freedom of person under the protection of the habeas corpus, and trial by juries impartially selected. These principles form the bright constellation which has gone before us and guided our steps through an age of revolution and reformation. The wisdom of our sages and blood of our heroes have been devoted to their attainment. They should be the creed of our political faith, the text of civic instruction, the touchstone by which to try the services of those we trust; and should we wander from them in moments of error or of alarm, let us hasten to retrace our steps and to regain the road which alone leads to peace, liberty, and safety.

## SEVENTH ANNUAL MESSAGE

By JAMES MONROE, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, DECEMBER 5, 1823<sup>1</sup>

**A**T THE proposal of the Russian Imperial Government, made through the minister of the Emperor residing here, a full power and instructions have been transmitted to the Minister of the United States at St. Petersburg, to arrange, by amicable negotiation, the respective rights and interests of the two nations on the northwest coast of this continent. A similar proposal had been made by His Imperial Majesty to the Government of Great Britain, which has likewise been acceded to. The Government of the United States has been desirous, by this friendly proceeding, of manifesting the great value which they have invariably attached to the friendship of the Emperor, and their solicitude to cultivate the best understanding with its government. In the discussions to which this interest has given rise and in the arrangements by which they may terminate, the occasion has been judged proper for asserting, as a principle in which the rights and interests of the United States are involved, that the American continents, by the free and independent condition which they have assumed and main-

<sup>1</sup> Richardson: "Messages and Papers of the Presidents," vol. 1, pp. 323-324.

<sup>1</sup> Richardson: "Messages and Papers of the Presidents," vol. 2, pp. 209, 218, 219.

tain, are henceforth not to be considered as subjects for future colonization by any European powers.

The citizens of the United States cherish sentiments the most friendly in favor of the liberty and happiness of their fellowmen on that side of the Atlantic. In the wars of the European powers, in matters relating to themselves, we have never taken any part, nor does it comport with our policy to so do. It is only when our rights are invaded or seriously menaced, that we resent injuries or make preparation for our defense. With the movements in this hemisphere we are, of necessity, more immediately connected, and by causes which must be obvious to all enlightened and impartial observers. The political system of the allied powers is essentially different in this respect from that of America. This difference proceeds from that which exists in their respective governments. And to the defense of our own, which has been achieved by the loss of so much blood and treasure, and matured by the wisdom of their most enlightened citizens, and under which we have enjoyed unexampled felicity, this whole nation is devoted. We owe it, therefore to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered, and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have, on great consideration and on just principles, acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them, or controlling in any other manner their destiny, by any European power, in any other light than as the manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

Our policy in regard to Europe, which was adopted at an early stage of the wars which have so long agitated that quarter of the globe, nevertheless remains the same, which is, not to interfere in the internal concerns of any of its powers; to consider the government *de facto* as the legitimate government for us; to cultivate friendly relations with it, and to preserve those relations by a frank, firm, and manly policy, meeting in all instances the just claims of every power, submitting to injuries from none. But in regard to those continents circumstances are eminently and conspicuously different. It is impossible that the allied powers should extend their political system to any portion of either continent without endangering our peace and happiness; nor can any one believe that our southern brethren, if left to themselves, would adopt it of their own accord. It is equally impossible, therefore, that we should behold such interposition, in any form, with indifference.

*They saw that to live by one man's will became the cause of all men's misery. This constrained them to come unto laws, wherein all men might see their duties beforehand and know the penalties of transgressing them.*

RICHARD HOOKER,  
*Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, 1594.*

## AN AMERICAN IDEA OF A LEAGUE OF NATIONS

By JAMES L. TRYON, Ph. D., Cambridge, Mass.

WHAT is the American idea of a league of nations? Who can say? One can tell what *an* American idea of a league of nations is with more confidence than he can state what *the* American idea of it is. The attitude of the United States Senate has shown that no American, not even the President himself, can with certainty, beforehand and uninstructed, assure other nations what kind of league his entire country, or the political party of which he is the leader, will unqualifiedly accept. But of several plans of a league we may say, "This is or was *an* American idea." We may say it of the original platform of the League to Enforce Peace, because it had a large number of adherents in America. We may say it of the Covenant of the League of Nations, because, though it resembles the outline of a proposed league of the same name that was put forward by the British leader, General Smuts, it was based in part on the plan of the League to Enforce Peace and in part on proposals made by our President, notably, if we are rightly informed, the guarantee of territorial integrity and independence, and was urged by him upon Europe as one of the prime objectives of the war and one of the chief points to be realized in the settlement of peace. We may say it of the Covenant as amended by the Lodge reservations, because they Americanized the spirit of that document by safeguarding the interests of the United States. And we may say it particularly of at least one other important plan that is not so well known as these proposals, but that cannot fail to receive first consideration if the Covenant fails of acceptance and we begin the agitation for world reconstruction anew. This plan was offered by the American Institute of International Law in its *Recommendations of Habana Concerning International Organization*, January 23, 1917.

The plan of the American Institute of International Law may be called the historic plan of the world-peace movement for international reconstruction, because it represents a continuity of thought and development on this subject from the beginning. The proposal for better international organization is not new and we must not let it appear to be; it has a long and honorable history which is sometimes overlooked. The new element in it is not in its aim, which is peace with justice, but in new methods of accomplishing its aim. A plan for a congress and court of nations, arbitration, mediation, and the codification of international law, although in some of its aspects primarily European, was elaborated by William Ladd, founder of the American Peace Society, and presented to the crowned heads of Europe before most of our public men were born. Substantially this plan, based on past political experience in the life of nations, but adapted to the growing needs of the times, was in process of general acceptance through the action of the Hague conferences, with which it harmonized. But it has also corresponded with the foreign policy of the United States, from the days of Washington through a succession of Presidents and Secretaries of State. Secretary Root, in our own time, urged upon the Amer-